



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW

VOLUME I

APRIL 1915

NUMBER 1

INTRODUCTORY: THE SPIRIT OF THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW

An interest in historical studies and the fashion of viewing actions and events in their historical relations are the natural inheritance of Catholics. Their religion is at once the culmination of the great procession of events which led up to the Incarnation and the central theme in all subsequent history. Not only history itself in its objective sense but historical science and the historiography of all nations were profoundly affected by the truths of the Gospel. From the teaching of Our Lord two great thought-compelling concepts were introduced into the idea of history, the Unity of History and the Philosophy of History; and as a result Catholic thought and feeling naturally and necessarily cast themselves into historical moulds. Under the pens of the great historians and theologians of the early Church these two ideas of the unity and interdependence of all men and all nations, and their foreordained destiny to a divinely appointed end under the light and guidance of God's Providence became part of the intellectual consciousness of Europe and profoundly affected all the affairs of life for more than a thousand years. Eusebius and St. Augustine, the one by his great comprehensive works on universal history and the history of the Church, the other by his scholarly treatise on "The City of God" marked out more effectually than rulers and statesmen the ideals and aims which dominated the period of history which is called the Middle Ages.

As might be expected, the Christian ideas of life which became the object of the fierce assaults of the writers of the Renaissance, ceased to dominate the historiography of that period, and since then historical science has felt the effect of each change in thought and

Philosophy. The movement towards the secularization of history, towards finding some means of bringing human activities in the past within the scope of physical science, has gone on with increasing momentum and has borne its most abundant fruits in the last century. One result of this tendency has been to raise the study of the past to a place of pre-eminence in the entire field of science. Investigation has come to concern itself more with origins and development, than with nature and essence. How things and institutions have become what they are is looked on as the best road to intimate knowledge of their character and constitution. The passion to open up the pages of the past in regard to inorganic as well as organic things, in the case of social as well as intellectual matters, has seized upon all branches of science, and has become the dominant characteristic of all scholarship at the present time. Experimentation has seized and appropriated the genetic method, "until in these days no science is sure of its footing until it has proclaimed its special interpretation of history."

Historical science has kept pace with this enlarged conception of its function and purpose. Its methodology has been elaborated and refined, until entrance to the field of pure history requires years of highly technical training. Day by day fresh stores of material are being uncovered which open up new and undreamt-of vistas into the past of the race, the old materials are being more carefully tested and sifted, and all the resources of modern scientific advancement are being called on to enable the historian to reconstruct the past activities of humanity. Historical Science has its formidable list of aids in the Auxiliary Sciences; it has its elaborate machinery of criticism and exegesis, all of which must be familiar to the person who hopes to accomplish anything which will meet the exacting demands made on the present-day historian.

The need for highly trained specialists in the field of history, and the urgent necessity that history should be cultivated for its own sake and not absorbed by any other science, will be manifest at once from the fate it has suffered at the hands of specialists in other departments of investigation. The statement that "history is past politics and politics present history," is as misleading as that "history is applied psychology"; and while the one may be as acceptable to the student of politics as the other to the student of social science, neither can be looked on as affording a key to the ebb and flow in the tide of

human affairs. A cut-and-dried formula to account for every past happening has come from the economic interpreter of history, just as the sociologist extends the scope of his science to give "an account of the origin, growth, structure and activities of society by the operation of physical, vital, psychical causes, working together in the process of evolution." All these theories and many others of like import are attempts to find the underlying cause in human history. The drift in intellectual currents which they indicate cannot fail to be of immense interest and significance to the Catholic theologian and moralist.

In the first place it is clear that by applying the test which they have invoked, all these investigators and scientists recognize the validity of historical standards. History has come to be the testing ground or the clearing-house of other scientific disciplines. Lines of investigation differing in regard to method and subject converge to one point, where their conclusions meet face to face. On the common ground of history the speculative results of all these sciences are brought together, each claiming to explain and interpret the others in its own terms. In one particular they are all agreed, that human history must be swept into the great stream of evolutionary influence, but they differ in regard to the controlling force in that movement of evolution or progress. As practical forces in the life of the present, the defenders of these various forms of social and political progress lay claim to a share in controlling law and government by being in possession of a knowledge of the principles which were directly operative in producing the great drama of past history. No one who is convinced that men are free agents, that they are responsible for their thoughts and actions, can be insensible to theories which strive to reduce all human activities from the highest to the lowest, to terms of physical and materialistic science.

For the Christian theologian no less than for the Christian moralist, history urges its claims with ever-increasing insistence. Exegesis, doctrine, morals, law and liturgy have to a large extent lost their purely speculative character. Criticism nowadays occupies the mind of the student of Scripture more largely than commentary. Christian dogma must hold its own against those who have scaled off its elements until nothing original is said to remain except a few vague fundamental truths which are traced to the rocks of pagan belief or thought. The constitution of the church is reduced to

adaptation or usurpation, and the worship of Christians to survivals of popular practices and customs picked up on the way through the centuries. Not only Christianity, but all forms of religious belief, and even the religious instinct in man are traced to causes which lie far outside the object of religious aspiration. Whether he will or not, the Christian theologian of the present has to meet his opponents on the field of history. He too has to go down into the lists where all other sciences have set up their shields. He has to contend against those who defend the cause of economic science, political science and psychological science. In addition he has to maintain that principle of history which is a necessary corollary of Christian teaching, the principle that God rules over the affairs of mankind and disposes all things according to His own purposes. The urgency of the call for the theologian, who is at the same time a trained historian, is manifest from the fact that historical science of the present demands of its votaries hermeneutical powers rather than the mere capacity for research. Research work has reached the stage where its processes are very largely mechanical, but the historian of the future is the man who carries to his work broad and general culture, solid and thorough equipment in the qualities which will enable him to group as well as to investigate facts. Professor George Burton Adams has admirably summed up the situation when asking "are we passing from an age of investigation to an age of speculation?" He says: "The prediction of a general reaction is too venturesome to be made here, it seems certain to me at least that in our own field a reaction is well under way and not to be avoided. For more than fifty years the historian has had possession of the field and has deemed it his sufficient mission to determine what the fact was, including the immediate conditions which gave it shape. Now he finds himself confronted with numerous groups of aggressive and confident writers in the same field who ask not what was the fact,—many of them seem to be comparatively little interested in that,—but their constant question is, what is the ultimate explanation of history, or, more modestly, what are the forces which determine human events and according to what laws do they act. This is nothing else than a new flaming up of interest in the philosophy or the science of history. No matter what disguise may be worn in a given case, no matter what the name may be by which a given group elects to call itself, no matter how small, in the

immensity of influences which make the whole, may be the force in which it would find the final explanation of history, the emphatic assertion which they all make is that history is the orderly progression of mankind to a definite end, and that we may know and state the laws which control the actions of men in organized society." It is therefore on the ground of history that all sciences find their common denominator; it is on this ground that Theology in all its branches has been summoned to make good its claims; and it is on the ground of history that the Christian view of life and conduct meets all the theories which reason and science have elaborated to explain man's place in the universe, the universe itself and its Creator.

The great burdens resting on Christian theologians, apologists, and moralists can be discharged only by men who are competent to deal with them in the fashion of the time. History has become a great and comprehensive science. It has its own standards and its peculiar methods. It requires the unstinting and devoted labors of large and tireless bands of students. Its results are the slow accretion from the labors of generations of workers and its progress is conditioned by impersonal and unselfish loyalty to the cause of truth. Catholics may justly claim a large share in the achievements of the past in the field of history. Many departments of historical science owe their rise and development to the zeal of Catholic scholars. The splendid traditions of the Benedictines of St. Maur who revolutionized the field of history in the seventeenth century and laid the foundations of modern historical scholarship, have never been lost. Today Catholic scholars throughout the world are working with the same unselfish zeal for truth as their predecessors who founded the sciences of Paleography, Chronology, Diplomatics, and Epigraphy. The names of Batiffol, Duchesne, Wilpert, Ehrhard, Bardenhewer, Butler, Finke, to mention only a few of those whose writings stand in the front rank of modern scholarship may fittingly be placed side by side with those of the generation of Tillemont and Mabillon. These contemporaries of ours, notwithstanding their devotion to the cause of religion and of truth, have neither the opportunity nor the means to do for the history of Catholicism in the United States what the exigencies of the present demand. The obligation of carrying on the splendid ecclesiastical traditions in the study and diffusion of historical knowledge, the duty of setting forth the past of the Church in the new world in a true and acceptable

light devolves on those who have access to the abundant stores of material which wait to be exploited, and who, with unselfish love for the science of history and sufficient initiation into its mysteries, dare to become its votaries and exponents.

The need of some such movement on the part of Catholics is abundantly evident. The methods suggest themselves. As a first and essential step there is needed a genuine, scientific interest in history, an interest which will attract students to devote themselves to the hard and unremitting labors which alone produce substantial results. There is unquestionably a deep and lively interest in history on the part of Catholics, but this interest has so far failed to produce any but desultory and sporadic effort. Much may be accomplished if the zeal and activities of those who are even now engaged in the study of history can be directed into one channel. Experience has shown that the most successful means of accomplishing this end is by the establishment of a publication which will afford a means of communication between the different workers, which will keep them *au courant* of all that is being done by their co-workers in the same and allied fields and which will set the standards required by the needs of the situation. It was thus that the *American Historical Review*, the *English Historical Review*, the *Analecta Bollandiana*, the *Revue Historique*, the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, the *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana* and scores of other publications came into existence. It was thus they proved their usefulness by creating needs other than those they were called into being to satisfy. The time has come in the development of Catholicity in the United States when it should be represented by a publication, national in scope and character, a publication devoted to the discussion of Catholic history on a scale corresponding to the importance which Catholicity has assumed in the life of the nation. Hence the reasons and the scope of this publication, THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW, of which this number is the first issue.

It is to be hoped that this publication will meet the needs of the situation and the hopes of its founders. A process is going on in the educational life of the country to which they could not be blind, a process which cannot fail to affect the future very profoundly, one to which the Catholic Church cannot be insensible. History is receiving year by year greater attention in our universities and schools. The need for preparation in European Seminars no longer exists so

far as the students of America are concerned. Highly trained and efficient corps of teachers abundantly able to supply as good as can be found anywhere in the world, are at the disposal of American students of history. It is no exaggeration to say that these men, with possibly few exceptions, are actuated by none but the highest and most commendable motives. Their interests are purely scientific. They seek unselfishly to gain truth. They are eager for wider knowledge no matter from what source it may come. It is not to be expected, however, that trained as they have been under the influence of a philosophy little inclined to admit the supernatural they can be expected to give expression to the Catholic view of history. Into their hands, nevertheless, has been committed the task of framing the laws governing society and social relations in the future. Having cut the leading strings which bound them to the old world, the influence of American scholars is bound to be a potent factor in developing historical methods and purposes.

Democracy has had its largest and most successful experiment here, but democracy has had new problems thrust upon it by the enormous economic changes which are now going on. It is only fair to expect that Catholics will bear their due share in helping to settle these problems. Their influence will be doubly enhanced if they are in a position from a study of the past to show how Catholics have already contributed their quota, and if above all they save the science of history from extravagant speculation and from exploitation in the interest of untried theories.

From the Catholic priests of America in a very special degree the appeal to aid and enlarge historical studies ought to receive a generous and hearty response. The Church to which they have given their lives has a permanent place in the world. Her present activities are linked with her centuries of struggle in the past. Unchanging, she meets each new change in the world by which she is surrounded, with a freshness and vigor, a power of co-ordination and adaptability, which exhibit the abundance of the resources, spiritual and intellectual, which she commands. Year by year, the Church in the United States is drawing new vigor and strength from the favorable conditions by which she is surrounded, and it is only natural that she should give evidences of this vigor in a way to suit the peculiar needs of the time and country.

Because of the grandeur and majesty of church history in gen-

eral, Catholics should not make the mistake of underrating the history of their own country. While the Church is yet, comparatively speaking, young here, it has exhibited all those qualities from which the faithful of the present day can draw counsel and inspiration. Every cultivated mind is struck with awe at the picture of the sufferings of the martyrs and confessors of the early Church, as well as with veneration for the long line of saints and sages whose names adorn the annals of ecclesiastical history. In the same way it is our duty to rescue from oblivion the names and deeds of those who from the days of Columbus have planted the faith in the new world, and who have striven to realize in new and frequently hostile surroundings the precepts of the Master. In this great work there are few priests who cannot actively co-operate. There are few who cannot save some precious memorial or tradition; for the workers of today are the heroes of tomorrow; and there is none who cannot by advice and encouragement promote the work of history by aiding when possible those who engage in its cultivation. In all this important undertaking, this REVIEW should take a leading part. It should serve as a means for diffusing the results of the labors of all who love American Catholic history, and it cannot fail to secure a large measure of success if it obtains the aid and co-operation of those who are interested in the cause it represents.

✠ THOMAS JOSEPH,
Bishop of Germanicopolis.
